

certain specific trends. Further, parents, teachers and psychologists will find the scales particularly helpful as a means of training their own powers of observation. Consideration of results will also give them greater insight into the social and emotional significance of small aspects of children's behaviour which would ordinarily pass unnoticed " (pp. 36-7).

With these views I largely agree, and in due place I shall quote some of the valuable material which Professor Bridges has brought together in the course of her own study. And yet I feel that my own reservations with regard to the method of the rating scale are still justified, and may usefully be repeated here. "... It can never be allowed to take the place of a direct examination of the full concrete behaviour of children. The actual choice of items in the rating scale is again an act of qualitative perception, and systematic scrutiny of the actual events *from the psychological point of view* (not the ethical or educational) is an essential preliminary. It would be quite sterile to substitute premature quantitative treatment for detailed and concrete study of individual psychological events and their concrete inter-relations—especially if the rating scale were set up with an educational or moral bias, which apparently tends to be the case. The rate of change in children towards behaviour which is considered desirable is not more significant psychologically than the actual behaviour which they do show at any given stage. For instance, it is surely at least as important to investigate the concrete situations which give rise in particular children to aggressiveness or defiance as it is to estimate the degree of their social adaptiveness at a given age, on a conventional scale.¹¹¹

This need for caution in entering upon extensive quanti-

tative studies has, I think, been further reinforced by some of the actual researches recently carried out.

Briefly, the major error into which quantitative studies handling large masses of data readily fall is the over-simplification of the problem, and the treatment of very different situations as being essentially the same.

This happens through the overlooking of qualifying differences—

differences which most academic persons used to observing children and their parents would know to be vital. A few

examples may suffice.

¹ *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, pp. 5-6.